

MANSFIELD AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE
DRAFT Minutes of November 10, 2015 regional meeting
Meeting with representatives from Ashford, Coventry, and Tolland

Present: Mansfield Agriculture Committee: Al Cyr (chair), Terry Wollen, Susan Mitchell, Vicky Wetherell, Jennifer Kaufman (staff), guest Stacey Stearns: Ashford Agriculture Commission: Art Talmadge, Sheri Simpson; Tolland Agriculture Commission: Linda Palmer; Coventry Agriculture Committee: Darcy Polansky, Melissa Higgins

Meeting was called to order at 7:35.

Vicky was appointed acting secretary.

Updates on Town Agriculture Committee/Commissions Representatives from each town shared their past and proposed activities.

Updates on the Dairy Industry in Connecticut Stacey Stearns presented an overview of the state's dairy business and its current challenges.

Opportunities for Regional Collaboration--2016 Work Plan

1. Cosponsor workshops: It was decided to sponsor a soil health workshop for farmers and the public in the spring. Perhaps AGvocate could sponsor it, and this regional group would help to promote it. Jennifer will make arrangements.
2. Farm Day Harvest Festival: This has been a Coventry event in October at the Nathan Hale Homestead for several years. Darcy asked if other towns would be interested in working on this as a regional event. The town representatives will take this request back to their town committee/commissions and report back at the next meeting.

Other potential ways to collaborate (some were suggested at the April 7 meeting):

Sponsor a regional farmers meeting with food and fun (possibly at Cassidy Hill Winery)

Support actions being advocated by a town's committee/commission

Share ways to achieve goals

Assist Chaplin and Tolland with start-up

Create a database of farmers in all towns for contacts about events

Cosponsor a local foods event at restaurants, farmers markets, farms

Cosponsor a restaurant tour featuring local foods

Cosponsor a tour of local farms for chefs

Cosponsor a bike ride to farms

Create a map of farms open to the public

Create a handout for restaurants listing farm products by season (Grow Windham is creating a similar guide)

Next meeting The next meeting will be on February 9, 2016 at the Mansfield Town Hall.

The meeting adjourned at 9:00.